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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The National Guard, the oldest component of the
3 Armed Forces of the United States and one of the nation's
4 longest-enduring institutions, will celebrate its 370th
5 birthday on December 13, 2006; and

6 WHEREAS, The National Guard traces its history back to the
7 earliest English colonies in North America; responsible for
8 their own defense, the colonists drew on English military
9 tradition and organized their male citizens into militias; and

10 WHEREAS, Following the winning of our independence against
11 Great Britain, the authors of the Constitution empowered
12 Congress to "provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining
13 the militia"; and

14 WHEREAS, The militia provided the bulk of the troops during
15 the Mexican War, the early months of the Civil War, and the
16 Spanish-American War; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1903, important national defense legislation
18 increased the role of the National Guard (as the militia was
19 now called) as a reserve force for the U.S. Army; in World War
20 I, the National Guard made up 40% of the U.S. combat divisions
21 in France; in World War II, National Guard units were among the
22 first to deploy overseas and the first to fight; and

23 WHEREAS, Following World War II, National Guard aviation
24 units, some of them dating back to World War I, became the Air
25 National Guard, the nation's newest reserve component; the
26 Guard stood on the frontiers of freedom during the Cold War,
27 sending soldiers and airmen to fight in the Korean War and to
28 reinforce NATO during the Berlin crisis of 1961-1962; during
29 the Vietnam War, almost 23,000 Army and Air Guardsmen were
30 called up for a year of active duty; some 8,700 were deployed

1 to Vietnam; and

2 WHEREAS, Over 75,000 Army and Air Guardsmen were called
3 upon to help bring a swift end to Desert Storm in 1991; since
4 that time, the National Guard has seen the nature of its
5 federal mission change, with more frequent call ups in response
6 to crises in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the skies over Iraq;
7 following the attacks of September 11, 2001, more than 50,000
8 Guardmembers were called up by both their states and the
9 federal government to provide security at home and combat
10 terrorism abroad; and

11 WHEREAS, In the largest and swiftest response to a domestic
12 disaster in history, the Guard deployed more than 50,000 troops
13 into the Gulf Region following Hurricane Katrina in 2005; and

14 WHEREAS, Today, tens of thousands of Guardmembers are
15 serving in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan, as the National
16 Guard continues its historic dual mission, providing to the
17 states units trained and equipped to protect life and property,
18 while providing to the nation units trained, equipped, and
19 ready to defend the United States and its interests, all over
20 the globe; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
23 we thank the men and women of the National Guard for doing
24 their duty, protecting our way of life, and ensuring our
25 freedom; and we congratulate them on the 370th anniversary of
26 the National Guard; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
28 presented to Major General Randal E. Thomas, Adjutant General
29 of the State of Illinois National Guard.